strategy
2004-2009

Defining and Driving the Development of Shared Services for the Government of Alberta

Alberta
CORPORATE SERVICE CENTRE

ACSC alberta corporate service centre
...a better way of doing things

Foreward

The Alberta Corporate Service Centre (ACSC) was created in 1999 to initiate the development and implementation of shared services. Much has been learned since then, particularly with respect to being effective and sought after by others. The partnerships and competencies required for an initiative of such magnitude present enormous challenges. Political and procedural barriers to adjusting finances, business process improvements and large-scale re-engineering now need to be addressed within a supportive culture if the business is to show marked improvements.

ACSC and its customers have taken stock. Together we have decided that the next five years need to be dedicated to further building capacity to play in this sophisticated arena. This plan is therefore dedicated to

- Deciding how to leverage our successes as we move forward,
- What went wrong and how we will fix it,
- Where the opportunities lie to move ACSC forward in its enterprise-wide role of service delivery,
- How ACSC will organize itself to capitalize on the opportunities and challenges facing it, and,
- How ACSC needs to position itself to be a leader in public sector shared services delivery.

Shared Services is an administrative strategy of the Government of Alberta which directly involves ACSC as well as other associated initiatives of the ministries of government.

Reporting to the Minister, Government Services and to the Deputy Minister, Executive Council, the newly-formed Administrative Strategy Committee (ASC) leads and governs the transformation of shared services development and implementation on behalf of the Government of Alberta. Shared services encompasses several large-scale, cross ministry initiatives which have been undertaken to continuously improve the business practices of government. The core membership of ASC consists of seven Deputy Ministers, chaired by the Deputy Minister of ACSC. The Administrative Strategy Committee also acts as the reporting authority for the Co-Chairs of the Councils on Human Resources, Administration, Finance and Information Technology.

ACSC is recognized as the government's primary service delivery vehicle for the shared services initiative. As such, the Deputy Minister in his capacity as Chair, ASC assists the government of Alberta in identifying opportunities for business improvement, and shared services delivery innovations. It is within this operating environment that ACSC has framed this plan.

WHAT WILL ACSC LOOK LIKE BY 2009?

Better, Cheaper, Accountable, and Sought-After

ACSC

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Hon. David Coutts (PC),
Minister, Government Services

Working Better and Costing Less

Great expectations surrounded the more than 1,200 people that left the various departments of government for a new home in the Alberta Corporate Service Centre (ACSC) approximately three years ago. Everyone agreed that potential savings and economies of scale could be realized if we all shared in the responsibility for finding better ways to manage and administer the government's day to day operations.

To date, the concept of shared services relating to administration, finance, human resources and information technology has the continued support of my office, my cabinet colleagues and executive management across all ministries of government. It is a novel concept in government, and Alberta continues to lead the country in piloting new and innovative approaches to government that works better and costs less.

We have made progress, but change of this order takes time and there is much yet to do. It would be very naive to think that by re-assigning people and places to a new business unit, fundamental change to the way government conducts its vital administrative functions would occur overnight. Issues of culture, disentanglement, strategic vs. operational capacity, and management support were superimposed on an immediate expectation to do new things with the same old tools. Service standards, lines of authority, funding, costing and pricing, policies and procedures, and leadership, all had to be re-invented for this new service. Throughout this transition, government did not miss a payday, people got hired, offices and buildings were managed, furniture was purchased, and computers were installed and networked, among hundreds of other things that most of us take for granted. The people of ACSC rose to the challenge, adapted wonderfully and are weathering the storms associated with introducing wide-scale change in a very large, complicated organization.

This strategic plan represents a benchmark for shared services in government and for the ACSC organization in particular. It recognizes the invaluable experience gained to date in piloting something *conceived* as fundamentally right for government while coming to understand the challenges to *doing* it right.

We have taken great strides to bring all of our stakeholders (customers, staff, and leaders) along on this journey to a preferred future for shared services within the government of Alberta. As an enterprise-wide initiative, everyone is an owner, and everyone has a role to play. This plan captures both the attitude and the aptitude needed to make it work for all of us and I look forward to helping to see it through.

"One person with a belief is equal to a force of ninety-nine who have only interests."

JOHN STUART MILL

ACSC alberta corporate service centre

Mr. Dave Rehill,
Deputy Minister & CEO, Alberta Corporate Service Centre,
Chair, Administrative Strategy Committee

Raising the Bar

History presents us with an occasion a good learner would not miss...

It is my belief that an organization comes of age, when it fully understands its position in the market place and what it needs to do to enhance that position.

To achieve this in a government setting, the Alberta Corporate Service Centre (ACSC) has had to inventory the business of government where no inventory existed, and attempt to qualify and quantify its value to the organization as a whole and to individual ministries. As our employees can attest, this has been an arduous process in and of itself, never mind trying to deliver services and improve on the business at the same time.

ACSC was an organizational response to a good idea. Initially encumbered by additional overhead in creation, a chargeback arrangement without credible baseline costs, and a staff complement wanting for management support and cultural glue to solidify its purpose, the implementation phase met with some resistance on both the part of the customer and the service provider. As we enter the fourth year of our mandate, the idea is still a good one and the reasons for difficulties encountered in implementation are becoming more obvious as we continue to gain insight and understanding with the help of our customers and staff.

For shared services to work well for government, a shared vision of success and a policy of acceptance across government is a first step towards addressing the basic challenges to implementing it. To realize the potential of this initiative, we must first understand the business of government well enough to be able to change it for the better. Our first three years have helped us arrive on this plateau. The next three to five years will enable us to focus on the changes needed, and to engage our staff in a common effort to manage change and the speed with which it happens.

To raise the bar and re-invent the business of government for the greater good requires a focus on capacity building in areas of leadership, re-engineering, and change management. Simply put, we need to figure out how to learn as a corporation, and to challenge the status quo where there is consensus that it needs to be challenged. This has required some fundamental changes to the way we are governed and structured, and how we manage our organization.

With the help of our stakeholders, we are re-focusing the organization on doing things better, and on making sure we have the ability to deliver with the right infrastructure, resources and people.

We have opted for a model of shared services that involves both customer and service provider in the planned evolution of the business. The required culture of service and sharing of responsibility and accountability between customer and service provider are works in progress which will form the foundation for monitoring and measuring our performance.

Over the term covered by this plan, ACSC will play a vital role in defining and enabling horizontal integration, thus assisting the government in pioneering a shared services model that others can aspire to. This plan sets the stage for making that happen and for your continuing support and help.

Why a Strategic Plan for ACSC?

A strategic plan can be thought of as a roadmap to a preferred future. For ACSC this involves describing that future in such a way as to ensure that the challenges and opportunities that it presents can be addressed within a logical framework. As Peter Drucker so aptly said, "*Strategic Planning is not about what to do tomorrow; it is about what to do today in contemplation of tomorrow*". In that context, we must decide what we need to do now to begin the desired transformation of the organization within an approximate five year framework and how we will behave and make decisions along the journey.

Shared services is a philosophy that is accepted and entrenched in the majority of Fortune 500 companies where it assists with ensuring continuous improvements in effectiveness and efficiency. Government has recently adopted the concept, but has yet to come to grips with its effective implementation. To make it work, collaborative approaches to learning and sharing of accountabilities and cost reduction strategies are needed. Alberta is positioned to champion the cause of government that works better and costs less, and hold itself accountable for enterprise-wide results. Re-invention of administrative systems and ongoing exploration of alternative service delivery mechanisms are needed, and can place Alberta in the forefront of creating benchmarks for shared services.

Re-inventing government takes time and involves a commitment to framing strategy that will initiate desired changes, supporting infrastructure to demonstrate commitment, and the necessary resources to do the job. As with any plan, the picture it paints today may be less relevant tomorrow. We therefore have to make a formal commitment to constantly engage our leaders, staff and customers in the information gathering and thought processes that generate a current picture. In this way, ACSC is assured of an ongoing fit within its operating environment. This plan represents the first step to renewing and revitalizing the concept of sharing and the vital role that the ACSC organization plays in facilitating the process on behalf of government. Doing the right thing for the Government of Alberta in this context means understanding and managing customer expectations as well as the standard of services required to do it better, cheaper and faster.

This first Strategic Plan was created with four key goals in mind:

- Describe a **PREFERRED FUTURE** with the help of all of ACSC's stakeholders.
- Secure **SUPPORT AND SHARING** for a legitimate initiative of government for the next leg of the journey.
- Build **CREDIBILITY for ACSC** in its attempts to reach out to its stakeholders and to confidently frame its future.
- Create the **DIRECTION** necessary to empower all of the stakeholders impacted by this plan to frame their future and their next steps, strategically and operationally.

"Adversity reveals genius, prosperity conceals it."

HORACE

Opportunity and Challege Facing ACSC

OPPORTUNITY: There is universal endorsement for the concept; our stakeholders clearly see the potential value of shared services.

CHALLENGE: There is universal agreement that the implementation requires further refinement; business practices must change.

Seizing the opportunity presented by the concept of shared administrative services within the Government of Alberta, involves building an ACSC that can

- Positively impact the way government conducts its internal business,
- Build trust and confidence in its ability to deliver its services, and,
- Set benchmarks for public sector shared services design and implementation.

Expectations of all shared services partners are high. As ACSC enters the fourth year of its mandate, there is a need to further articulate and re-affirm these expectations. There is also a need to qualify and to quantify where the concept and its implementation may have fallen short of expectations. Finally, there is a need to affirm with our shared service partners, the means by which ACSC can be empowered to make necessary changes on behalf of its stakeholders.

Overcoming the challenges for a successful implementation of shared services involves formal means for ACSC to build the capacity to

- Listen to our staff, customers and leaders,
- Respond objectively to all input received for enhancing operations and shared services,
- Be accountable for our actions and the use of resources allocated to us, and,
- Explore, invent, and share better ways of doing things on behalf of the Government of Alberta.

To do these things ACSC formalized a new mission based upon the authority of its current mandate. The new mission presumes the need to rise to the opportunity and overcome the challenge described above. Its words were chosen to direct ACSC to

- **Assume leadership:** Plan, direct and enable the organization to meet its challenge.
- **Manage well:** Communicate with, empower and enable ACSC staff to rise to their potential.
- **Build a service culture:** Consult, train and mentor staff as entrepreneurial service providers.
- **Monitor and evaluate:** Involve stakeholders, consolidate, evaluate and report as part of a cycle of *continuous improvement*.

Managing Expectations:
OF OTHERS AND OURSELVES

THE ACSC MANDATE: What Others Expect of Us

In 1999, the Alberta Corporate Service Centre (ACSC) was established to provide corporate transactional services in the finance, human resources, information technology and administration (courier, printing, office equipment, purchasing and warehousing, supply management, libraries, records management and forms, and facilities planning and operations, etc.) areas.

At the time, ACSC was expected to look for effectiveness and efficiency gains for government and means of producing a standardized approach to service delivery where practical. To date the organization has focused on meeting existing service levels, understanding and stabilizing service delivery costs and developing a satisfactory working relationship with customers while attempting to create a corporate presence within government and for its own staff.

In 2003, amidst growing concern that the enterprise could not rise to the challenge of faster, better, cheaper, without fundamental changes to attitude, aptitude and enabling strategy and infrastructure, ACSC revisited its mandate and its mission with support and involvement of its affected stakeholders. The new mission thus laid the foundation for ACSC to position itself to succeed with full knowledge of stakeholder expectations and the barriers associated with meeting them.

THE ACSC MISSION: What We Expect of Ourselves

As a customer-owned enterprise, the Alberta Corporate Service Centre provides an entrepreneurial, corporate focus to the delivery of support services to the Government of Alberta. It earns its customer's loyalty by being the best in its business, thus enabling its customers to be the best in their business.

THE ACSC MISSION: What is new about this mission?

This mission empowers ACSC and its partners, to continuously look for *"A Better Way of Doing Things"*. To succeed, many concepts on how business administration is led, managed and resourced in government need to be challenged, while keeping the good and improving where needed. This can only be achieved if this vision is shared by the enterprise of government. Our strategy, structure and resource base is designed to foster this broad understanding.

"Well done is better than well said".

BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

A Culture of Service:
LAYING THE FOUNDATION

PERFORMANCE IS AN ATTITUDE: How We Do Things Around Here

As a process-driven organization, our focus is on continuous improvement, with ACSC acting as a catalyst for a broader degree of change to the way government conducts its internal business. To accomplish this we will foster and encourage a culture of collaboration where, in the true spirit of shared services

- problems and solutions are shared by the service delivery agent and the client, and
- ACSC is responsible and accountable for its internal business development, but its customers own the services received and can expect predictable levels of quality service and fair associated costs,
- all employees of ACSC are the face of the organization and as such are empowered to drive and assist with service improvements on a daily basis,
- benchmarking and planning are ongoing, supported, and institutionalized activities, shared between vendor and client, and,
- employees and their partners, are valued, respected and recognized for innovative and timely delivery of exceptional services to our customers.

CORE VALUES: The Keys to an Entrepreneurial and Team-oriented Workplace

- **EMPOWERMENT** recognizes that all of us can do more than any one of us, if we know what is expected and are allowed to try.
- **INNOVATION** enables and rewards us for challenging the status quo with new solutions, and being heard, regardless of where we reside in the organization.
- **QUALITY** is the result of continuous improvement and the ability of the organization to understand and to learn.
- **COLLABORATION** signals ACSC's commitment to reach out and involve its customers in framing expectations and priorities.
- **ACCOUNTABILITY** is achieved when all stakeholders agree that risk was defined, managed and reported on their behalf.
- **CREDIBILITY** is achieved when success is celebrated and failure understood and leveraged.

Getting Our Priorities in Order

TAKING AN OBJECTIVE LOOK AT WHAT OUR STAKEHOLDERS THINK

The Performance Audit component of Strategic Planning involves understanding what all of ACSC's affected stakeholders are identifying as risks and barriers to the achievement of its mission. A process using sophisticated mathematical algorithms assisted us in determining what the stakeholders agree upon as key risks and priorities, and what they disagree on. The resulting ordinal probabilities that are generated assist ACSC's executive on an ongoing basis by providing key decision-making intelligence.

Over 985 stakeholders participated in ACSC's first performance audit, generating over 1,100 issues. These were described by Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Councils, ACSC management and staff, and a host of Ministry customers as barriers to, or risks associated with, the achievement of the stated mission of ACSC. These were sorted to approximately 100 urgent, important, and controversial (where key groups differ significantly) issues.

The strategic summary below indicates four key risk areas and the overriding concerns deserving a strategic response from ACSC in this plan.

1. WHAT YOU TOLD US ABOUT SERVICE DELIVERY:

Stakeholders agreed the following seven areas posed the greatest risk to ACSC's ability to enhance its service delivery mechanisms:

- The means by which ACSC is funded and how it measures and reports its spending needs to be re-visited.
- Improvements to the business processes driving service delivery are required.
- A customer service focus is critical for ACSC.
- Ministries and ACSC must share the same definition of service excellence.
- The service delivery model must be flexible and adaptive to the needs of the Ministry.
- ACSC managers and staff should be actively forging relationships with the customer.
- ACSC must ensure that it has staff that can do the job, take on new challenges and can be held accountable.

Stakeholder groups were decidedly split on their opinions in the following areas:

- There needs to be a Ministry budget for ACSC.
- ACSC's role in standardization of work in government needs to be defined.
- Financial forecasting for ACSC needs to be simplified.
- Outsourcing and alternative service delivery should be an ongoing consideration for some services of ACSC.

A difference of opinion signals a need to know.

Getting Our Priorities in Order...cont'd

2. WHAT YOU TOLD US ABOUT LEADING AND MANAGING:

Stakeholders agreed the following five areas posed the greatest risk to ACSC's ability to lead and manage the organization through its successful transformation:

- ACSC needs to lead the organization towards an integrated, service-oriented culture.
- ACSC needs to create a culture where employees feel responsible, accountable and proud to work for the organization.
- ACSC must formally encourage innovation and risk taking as part of the job.
- ACSC must provide assurances relating to change to allow staff to focus on better services to the client.
- ACSC needs to improve on internal and external communications.

Stakeholder groups were decidedly split on their opinions in the following areas:

- Corporate ownership of ACSC needs to be articulated.
- Questions regarding capability and accountability within ACSC's management ranks need to be addressed.
- There is a perception that costs are rising while service levels are not improving.
- Financial accountability needs to be ensured to begin to build credibility for ACSC and its services.

3. WHAT YOU TOLD US ABOUT ACSC's ABILITY TO PLAN EFFECTIVELY:

Stakeholders agreed the following four areas posed the greatest risk to ACSC's planning systems and its ability to plan effectively:

- A planning process is required that ensures ACSC's strategic fit with Government of Alberta's expectations.
- There is a need to demonstrate consensus on future directions and priorities.
- There needs to be a greater emphasis on strategic and operational planning.
- ACSC should focus its mission on a few key priorities and build excellence from there.

Stakeholders groups were decidedly split on their opinion in the following area:

- There needs to be demonstrated compelling reasons for Ministries to embrace shared services as a workable concept.

4. WHAT YOU TOLD US ABOUT MEASURING & IMPROVING DAILY:

Stakeholders agreed the following four areas posed the greatest risk to ACSC's ability to monitor and evaluate its performance regularly:

- ACSC must measure and report regularly on business improvement.
- ACSC should involve customers in business improvement.
- ACSC must define its performance management system.
- ACSC needs to strengthen its reporting and benchmarking systems.

Stakeholder groups were decidedly split on their opinions in the following areas:

- Service level agreements with defined performance criteria are needed.
- ACSC needs to demonstrate an entrepreneurial focus and willingness to be benchmarked against other service providers.

What We're Going to Do About
SERVICE DELIVERY ▪ Funding, systems, people...

"Skill and confidence are an unconquered army."

GEORGE HERBERT

ACCOUNTABILITY, SENSITIVITY AND CUSTOMER RELATIONS ARE THE BENCHMARKS OF GREAT SERVICE. ACSC WILL ADDRESS CHANGES NEEDED TO:

Funding of ACSC and how it measures and reports its spending. This implies

- Addressing ownership of ACSC with respect to allocation of resources to its internal operations and to its service delivery mechanisms.
- Ensuring that forecasting and accounting tools are oriented as key drivers to making improvements to
  - ACSC management systems
  - Service delivery systems
  - Pricing and costing models

Standardize and Integrate approaches to the delivery of corporate services focusing on

- Enterprise-wide solutions and standardization of systems where practical. This initiative would involve ACSC and its key customers in re-engineering and business process improvement for targeted areas.
- Exploration of alternative service delivery for some of the services offered through ACSC.
- A shared definition of service excellence with the customer and means to measure and improve performance regularly.

Human Resources Development for ACSC to ensure that the organization has the capacity to create and deliver shared services on behalf of the Government of Alberta

Customer Service Evaluations tied to the objective assessment of service delivery in targeted locations.

DESIRED RESULTS:

A funding model is installed to enable ACSC to conduct business improvement work on behalf of government.

Under the direction of the Administrative Strategy Committee, ACSC leads the initiative to re-engineer and standardize key administrative processes of government.

Performance measures are installed to track progress of service delivery improvements to the Ministries.

A costing/pricing model is implemented, enabling service provider and customer to forecast costs and spending.

Human Resources capacity is enhanced to enable ACSC to act effectively on strategic priorities of the organization.

Customer service evaluation tools are deployed based on the strategic priorities of ACSC and form part of an ongoing performance auditing process.

What We're Going to Do About
LEADING AND MANAGING ▪ Vision, Communications, Development...

"A new idea is delicate. It can be killed by a sneer or a yawn; it can be stabbed to death by a quip and worried to death by a frown on the right man's brow".

CHARLES BROWER

ACSC MUST BE LED AND MANAGED TOWARDS AN INTEGRATED, SERVICE-ORIENTED, ENTREPRENEURIAL CULTURE. THIS TRANSFORMATION REQUIRES

Leadership which is oriented toward defining vision and clarifying expectations. ACSC leadership must provide enabling mechanisms to allow management and staff to perform. It will

- Provide a clear description of ACSC, its ownership and what needs to be done to render it a leader in government shared services.
- Provide an enabling structure reflective of an integrated, forward-thinking and performance-oriented organization. This includes
  - a governance structure that places ownership of shared services in the hands of the government of Alberta as a single enterprise,
- a re-structuring of the ACSC organization to reflect the need for
  - horizontal integration
  - empowerment of the managers of ACSC to deliver and improve on their ability to innovate, and,
  - defining and measuring performance.

Management which is oriented toward translating vision and expectations to action. ACSC managers must provide the direction and tools to

- Lead change and the development of a service culture.
- Empower, mentor and coach employees to enhance service delivery.
- Communicate regularly at all levels of the organization and with stakeholders to celebrate success, manage issues and leverage failure.
- Ensure accountability for all actions of the organization under their control.

DESIRED RESULTS:

An Administrative Strategy Committee is established that functions as the governing body for shared services and ACSC business.

A new organizational structure for ACSC focused on the need for horizontal integration, greater accountability, and corporate renewal is installed.

A communications strategy enabling ongoing dialogue with staff of ACSC and their affected stakeholders is presented and implemented.

A performance management system is in place that defines for managers and staff of ACSC what to measure and to what end.

A change management strategy that enables ACSC managers to define the change process and describe its outcomes is in use and involves all managers and staff of ACSC.

What We're Going to Do About
PLANNING ▪ Strategic Fit, Performance Management, Reporting...

A PLANNING SYSTEM WILL BE DESIGNED AND INSTALLED TO ENSURE THAT

Strategy is reflective of customer expectations and integral to their success. ACSC will commit to defining strategy based upon

- The Government of Alberta Strategic and Business Plans.
- Regular input from ACSC governing bodies and customers.
- Benchmarks for the delivery of services as established across industry and government.
- Environmental scans related to the delivery of shared services programs and government administration in general.

Performance Management for the ACSC organization is an essential component of regular, annual strategic planning activities. Systems will be devised to define key performance targets and means of measuring progress towards them. This will include

- A planning hierarchy which specifies levels of detail for the development of performance measures at all levels of the organization which are consistent with the overall goals of ACSC.
- A recurring performance audit and gap analysis involving affected stakeholders.
- Regular endorsement of ACSC strategic plans by its governing bodies drive business and operational planning.

Reporting is consistent and integrated across all levels of planning and occurs on a timely basis to allow the organization to assess performance and to learn.

- Annual strategic plans, business plans, agency plans, operating plans will be prepared and reviewed for consistency and accuracy.
- Timely reporting mechanisms will be installed for targeted performance measures and to ensure the capacity for continuous improvement.

DESIRED RESULTS:

Administrative Strategy Committee provides endorsement of ACSC's strategic plan

Priorities are established for the next five years with plans for regular review.

A Benchmarking system that captures activities within GoA, the private sector and with other governments is installed.

Alternative service delivery systems are under regular review.

Performance management systems are communicated to all elements of ACSC and measures are developed with affected stakeholder input.

Strategic and business plans are driving communications efforts for ACSC.

ACSC has a published strategic plan, business plan, agency plan, operational plans and annual reports which are reviewed and consistent.

Regular reporting of performance is initiated and feeds into regular monitoring, evaluation and planning.

What We're Going to Do About
MEASURING & IMPROVING DAILY • Monitoring, Evaluation, Reporting...

CONTINUOUS IMPROVEMENT INVOLVES THE ABILITY TO ACTIVELY MANAGE PERFORMANCE. SYSTEMS ARE NEEDED TO ENSURE

Performance Measures are produced for all levels of corporate operations and service delivery and monitoring systems are in place to

- Enable managers and staff to address issues and correct errors as they occur.
- Enable managers and staff to report regularly with recommendations for improvement to systems, processes, products and services.
- Define and measure progress at all levels such as
  - Cross-ministry initiatives,
  - ACSC strategy,
  - ACSC business development,
  - ACSC operations, and,
  - ACSC service delivery / customer interface.

Evaluation of corporate performance is conducted regularly in light of desired outcomes with a capacity to recommend improvements to strategy and operations based on

- Pre-determined measurements of progress against chosen benchmarks researched by the organization.
- Changing or evolving customer expectations.
- Changing or evolving government policy.

The organization and its customers have the means and the capacity to learn in the context of a joint venture called shared services.

Regular reporting is required from all key operational and service delivery areas.

DESIRED RESULTS:

Risk and associated issues are described, quantified, monitored and evaluated as part of the regular planning cycle for ACSC.

Performance measures are designed and installed to provide ongoing indicators of success for all elements of ACSC.

ACSC enters into agreements with other stakeholders to work towards achieving business improvements.

Means are installed to report on new ways of doing business and business innovations discovered by staff across the organization.

A Continuous improvement system is installed and formalized in concert with ACSC's performance management systems.

Regular reports on corporate performance are produced and assist with business improvements.

ACSC's Backbone:
ITS PEOPLE

The job of the Alberta Corporate Service Centre is a people job. In general, the people resources deployed to deliver Finance Services, Human Resources Services, Information Technology and Administration account for about 78% of ACSC's annual budget! Any investments in the future of ACSC are investments in people. The capacity of ACSC to live up to the expectations outlined in this strategic plan can be measured by its ability to effectively motivate and mobilize its human resources.

The risks, issues, and concerns identified as major barriers to the achievement of the ACSC's mission, are without exception, people-dependent. It is for this reason that the human resource issue is the last, yet most vital link in the chain of events that will enable ACSC to plan for and attain success. Only when we know what it is we are asking of our people can we begin to assess whether or not they have the capacity and the ability to deliver.

Successfully embracing concepts like innovation, customer service ethic, continuous improvement, mentoring and coaching requires individual commitment and a desire to change, rather than ambivalent compliance. It is for this reason that all of our stakeholders were asked for their help in deciding what mattered most to the organization and to its customers in the medium to long term. Based on this input ACSC will commit to the encouragement of a corporate culture that is

- Continuously engaging employees with a shared ACSC vision,
- Creating an environment supporting innovation and service excellence defined by quality and productivity,
- Becoming more responsive to customers, and,
- Improving internal communications.

Actively targeting the ongoing development of our human resources by

- Identifying the skills and competencies needed now and in the future,
- Assessing competency gaps and the means to close them by
- developing employees' skills and competencies to do their job now and in the future,
- acquiring additional needed skills and competencies for the future, and,
- allocating appropriate resources for supporting employee development.

Ensuring that ACSC is part of an accountability matrix aimed at

- Clarifying and assigning clear accountabilities within ACSC,
- Clarifying roles between ACSC and Ministries, and,
- Communicating ACSC goals and clarifying expectations with employees .

Strategic planning and performance management are iterative processes, and ACSC employees will be given both the means and the opportunity to participate in the evolution of the organization as its valued professionals.

"Special thanks to all of the people of ACSC, its customers and leaders who participated in making this plan relevant, timely and do-able."

Summary:
WHERE TO FROM HERE?

The Alberta Corporate Service Centre Strategic Plan outlines the exciting challenges and opportunities that lay ahead. By looking at our business environment, the concerns of our stakeholders, the intent of our leadership, and then developing a clear picture of where we want to be five years down the road, the things we have to do this year and next to begin to move us there become clear to us.

It is important to understand that a strategic plan is a document that tries to capture the essence the organization requires to rise to challenges at the time of its printing. Strategic planning on the other hand, is an activity that needs to happen every day as we work and make decisions relevant to our future. In that sense, the plan is considered implemented and working when it

- promotes discussion, further strategic *planning* and decision-making guidance,
- guides the production of business and operational plans,
- installs a code of conduct / behaviour amongst leaders and staff,
- empowers managers to act,
- drives communications,
- influences customers to buy, and,
- legitimizes activity across all functions of the organization.

A strategic plan is a product and a first major step aimed at re-vitalizing and re-inventing what all of us know to be a good thing for government. It is designed to set guidelines and to be revised on an ongoing basis to reflect changes in our operating environment or changes to the overall administrative agenda of government. As such it is best served by capturing ongoing input such as benchmarks (*borrowing from the best*), environmental scans (*our best intelligence on what the future is offering*), risk assessment (*finding out what could slow us down on our journey*), and monitoring and evaluation (*involving all affected parties in measuring how we are doing and offering ways to improve*).

This plan also signals the beginning of a new set of corporate standards and behaviours for the organization as it positions itself to find, and be

"A Better Way of Doing Things"

BY 2009:

- **ACSC is established** and working well as a government model of shared services. Wide-scale recognition of Alberta's leadership for this initiative has been achieved.
- **BEST PRACTICES and BENCHMARKING** activities are focused and conducted in support of strategic priorities for ACSC.
- **ALTERNATIVE SERVICE DELIVERY** mechanisms are explored and pursued on an ongoing basis with new business ventures in mind.

CONTINUED...

BY 2009...CONTINUED

- **ACSC leads thinking and action** related to expansion of the shared services model to other public sector partners.
- **RE-ENGINEERING** has produced better ways of doing business in government.
- **BUSINESS PROCESS IMPROVEMENTS** are ongoing and tied to an institutionalized capacity to continuously improve.
- **CREATIVE FINANCING OPTIONS** have enabled ACSC to lead in innovation and improvement of shared services.
- **ACSC is a vendor of choice.**
- **ACSC is an employer of choice.**
- **PERFORMANCE** is assured.

We Want to Hear From You!

PLEASE SEND ALL ENQUIRIES TO:

ALBERTA CORPORATE SERVICE CENTRE
11th Floor, Seventh Street Plaza
10030 – 107 Street
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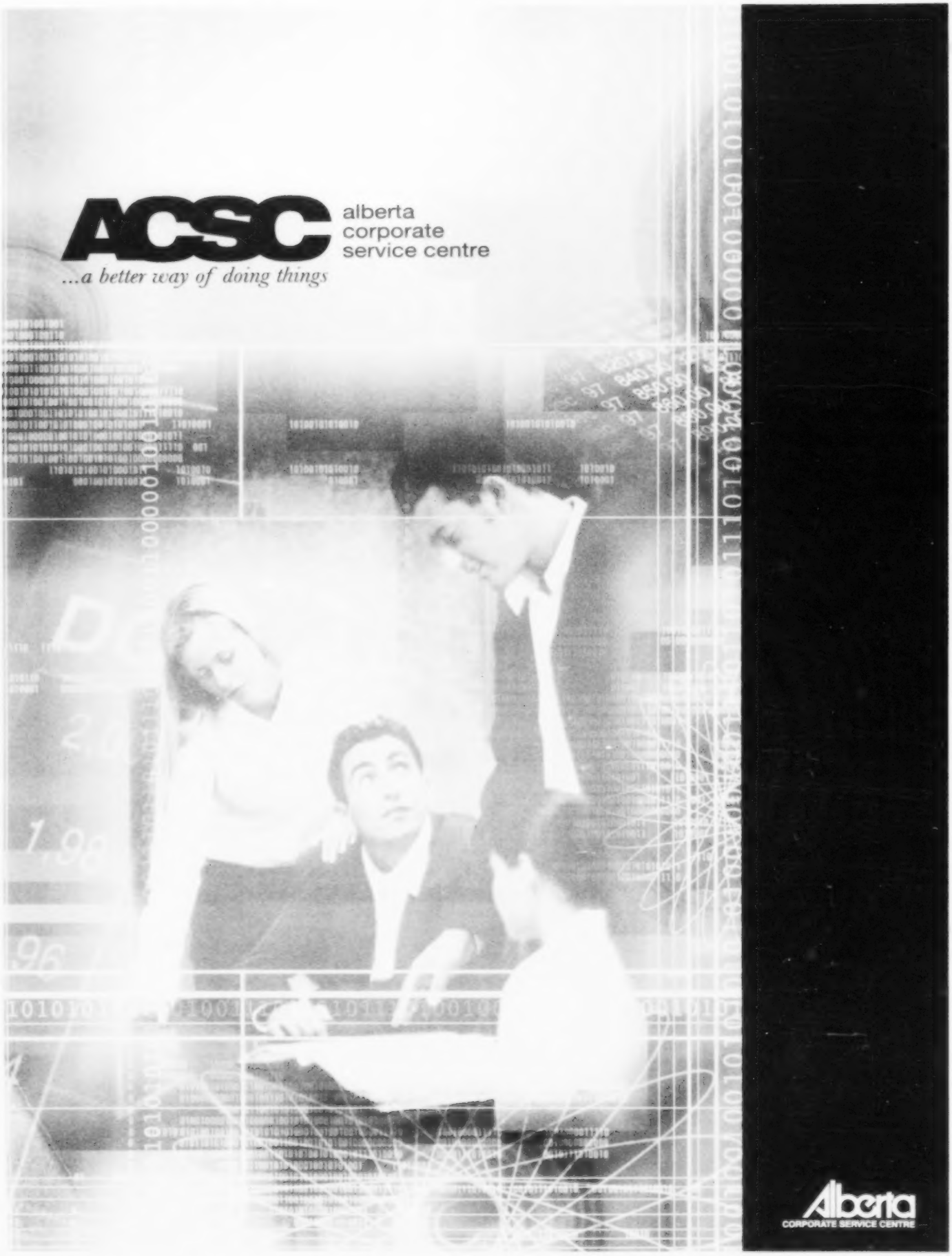
ACSC alberta corporate service centre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